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## THE ART OF QUARRELLING.

SAVAGES and barbarians may quarrel without much skill in the art of doing so. They need not disagree very often nor at all elaborately. But for anything like polished life, where quarrelling has to go on nearly perpetually, more ability is needed. A few cases there are of persons so gifted by nature that they can quarrel, as it were, by instinct. The very smallest provocation will serve their purpose. They can prolong an occasion to the uttermost; and end the affair triumphantly. But ordinary people cannot trust to their unaided capacities in that way; they need helps, rules, ascertained modes. It is shameful that after all these ages of practice, and in spite of a new special department—that of theological controversy—we can scarcely be said to have a smattering even of the right principles of such an art. The only thing persons in general do as badly as quarrelling is being amiable. There are those who in displaying affection are more awkward, excessive, and ludicrous, than in managing their differences. But for that there is some excuse. We have not so much practice in being friendly; and, taken altogether, it is of much less importance than quarrelling.

The primary defect of quarrelling is a certain absence of all versatility. There is no exercise of the intellect in it. People who would be ashamed of never being seen but in one coat or one bonnet, have only one quarrel for all occasions. It is not often that any attempt is made to disguise it; but it would be all in vain if they did try. The glances, the tones, the stupid movements with which they disagree to-day with a cabman over his fare, are just the same as those with which they raged last week against their son or daughter for marrying secretly; they are the same which they will have to use again to-morrow when the cook spoils the dinner. Their intimate acquaintances can generally foretell the very order of the vituperative epithets. Having done with the quarrel, they somehow stow it away ready for future use, just as they do their pocket-handkerchiefs. Cases

there even are in which persons cannot fairly call the single style of quarrelling they have their own. The article is an imitation; it really belongs to somebody else. Sometimes you know who the real proprietor is. In a good many regimental messes, very frequently on board ship, indeed in most public establishments where there happens to be a man pretty high up on the staff, with enough of temper to impress the rest, one quarrel—that individual's—does duty for all. When he is not wanting it—for at those times the rest are quiet—the others use it, drawing upon his gestures, his looks, his intonations, his phrases. The weaker persons among them will even take this borrowed quarrel home, and boastfully bring it into play among their relatives and friends, at times surprising them at first very greatly as to where it has been picked up. They know it is too impressive for the individual himself.

A great drawback arising in this way to quarrelling is, that it nearly always runs into ludicrous excess of violence. People have no power of adjusting the degree of anger. If others do not agree with them, they have only the one monotonous resource of wishing them annihilated. So far as looks and words will effect it, they accomplish this at once. If we had but for a single day the power of giving effect to our bad wills, it would be clearly seen at what a low stage quarrelling is among us. Everything would be wrecked by night. See two men differing as to the right of sitting in the best corner of a railway carriage. If only each could have his way, whiff! the other—that is to say, both—would be instantly blotted out of being, never needing even the worst seat any more. The trains would all come into the terminus stations before their time, having been lightened on the road by half of the passengers disappearing. Or take a couple of ladies passing in the street. One treads on the other's skirt. Swish! she is gone into nonentity. All for a tear of an inch of silk! Or there are three parsons on a platform, discussing the doctrines of Christian love, and happening to differ as to the right term—pah! all three, in turn, disappear, annihilated, leaving

only slight sulphureous odours behind them! Is it not palpable that there is stupidity here? It is only in rare cases that a difference as to a seat in a railway train, a tear of an inch of silk, or even a quarrel, as to a doctrinal phrase respecting Christian love, would reasonably warrant the blotting out of being of fellow-creatures. What all these things ought really to do is to make the parties keen, lively, witty, and forbearing. It is pitiful to see how the opportunities of rendering life less same and dull by skilful and right-minded quarrelling are missed.

For agreeing has not half the sources of interest that disagreeing has. A dispute is always more or less dramatic, spectacular; this scarcely ever holds true of being friendly. The rudest, most common persons can command attention while they differ; it is only when they make it up that they straightway become nobodies again. But for this strange attractiveness of quarrelling, there are many persons who would never draw a glance from outsiders throughout their whole lives. It is not until after being disappointed a thousand times by disagreements turning out to be as dull and unimportant as the absence of them, that the fascination slackens. But in the case of a serious difference between high-spirited, sound-hearted, clear-headed individuals, especially if they have been good friends before, the interest rises to its full height. Not to be able to appreciate the shifting charms of such a quarrel is proof of great intellectual obtuseness, as well as of much moral stolidity. Life has nothing to shew so variously attractive; in no other way can all the possibilities of human character be so brilliantly brought out. Literature, art, history, all find their best materials in quarrels of this kind. Look closely, and you will see it is with such incidents they most successfully deal. Very fortunately for mankind, there has in time past been some good quarrelling, of some of which the race may be proud.

If we all always agreed, it is impossible to say how slovenly we might not become in our mutual intercourse. Most friends, and nearly all married people, degenerate in that respect from the first establishment of thorough familiarity; sinking day by day into greater looseness of phrase and bearing. It is only an occasional tiff, with the permanent chance of others in the intervals, that prevents things from being yet worse. Watch two intelligent, accomplished men of the world, who are facing one another as enemies. Then you know how fine proper restraint of demeanour may become. Few lovers are half as mindful of what is due to one another. You then perceive that in the case of all noble natures it is hostility that gives to intercourse the last finishing touch of politeness. By some ladies, at such times, the grace of lofty carriage is so magnificently shewn, that to disinterested spectators it almost seems a pity they should ever become friends again. But to wish that is wrong. A quarrel ought to end at the right juncture with a happy *dénouement*—a reconciliation; if it did not, how could the same parties ever quarrel again? However, in the present low state of the art these latter considerations do not apply in one instance out of a hundred. In the other ninety-nine, there is not the slightest pretension to elegance in the display of indignation; a quarrel instantly makes those engaging in it absurd.

But the greatest, most stupid mistake of all connected with quarrelling is made, not by the principals, but by good-natured silly outsiders. They hurry to huddle up a disagreement, as if the chief thing was to cut it short. It is scarcely possible to have a quarrel fully out now, owing to this instant interference. This is a serious error. A good quarrel will not be huddled up: it always breaks out again, generally in a worse way. The only result is, that, instead of a properly adjusted difference, you have half-a-dozen fragmentary outrages, linked by a sour rankling of painfully suppressed discontent. It would be a very startling explosion in society, if all these imperfectly treated differences were at once let loose; but, as soon as it was over, the social atmosphere would be cleared immensely. A leisurely, in fact, a cold severity needs to be exercised by the outsiders. They ought rather to insist that a quarrel once begun should not end too hastily. It should be made to partake more of a judicial process; a full, absolute exhaustion of the matter being enforced. A quarrel is necessarily a public affair—the rights of the public in it ought to be far better recognised than they are. Now, everybody appears to think himself entitled to quarrel whenever and however he chooses. This needs altering entirely. Let it be clearly understood that nobody is justified in quarrelling unless he can be vivacious, witty, self-controlled in it. The present absence of all criticism of this kind does not prevent people from quarrelling; it only leaves them free to quarrel badly—to take no pains over it. But especially ought sudden, wholesale, what may be called lump, forgiveness to be discredited. Half the evils of quarrelling can be traced to the shameful abuse of this too easy resource for stupidity and indolence. To recommend forgiveness as a simple sovereign cure for all quarrels is absurd. The question always remains, which of them is to be forgiven? Very religious persons, it is true, forgive one another. In some cases, when very effectively done, it is the finest stroke in all the quarrel. Where it is used as part of the tactics of a dispute, it cannot fairly be objected to; the only requirement being that, to make this quite clear, the forgiveness shall be very malicious. At anyrate, it is a mistake on the part of the clergy so to cry up haste in forgiveness as an added virtue. It is not the height of religion never to quarrel, but always to do so in a becoming spirit. A man who can bear to be forgiven, without its making the disagreement worse, will not get into a quarrel without its being greatly the fault of the other person; and he will generally find his way out of it, rationally, without any need for the exercise of so celestial a virtue by the one most to blame. It is clear that to give the latter the privilege of ostentatiously pardoning the one least in the wrong, is to let him do himself a great moral injury.

There is one wide rule which can be laid down in addition to the obligations on both sides to be witty, painstaking, and interesting, requirements which of themselves would go a long way to debar many people from quarrelling at all. It is for the better recognition of a certain *grotesquerie* which circumstances exhibit in and of themselves. There is a greatly overlooked native tendency in things in this world to make pleasant fools of all persons who have to do with them. Individuals go on

stolidly, just as if they had only persons to deal with, wholly ignoring the part played in nearly every transaction by those droll, wicked, sprightly, clever goblins of events. These often outwit men and women with a skill beyond the best unraveling. In very many quarrels the misunderstanding is one for which neither of the human parties really is accountable; it has been caused by this inevitable third actuality, which is always anonymously present moving between the two, with finger on its lip, or slyly laid beside its nose. Nothing but the most watchful observation, the promptest action, and a liberal ignoring of some inexplicabilities, will prevent any business which approaches complexity from being entangled in this most innocent, yet most malicious way. Must it not often be foolish to look for a full explanation of an *imbroglio* from two parties, when a third one wholly overlooked has been the principal performer in it? In every case of a difference, the first thing done should be to try and find out how much of it is shiftable from the human shoulders—there should be a readiness to forego complete explanations so soon as it is seen that circumstances have had much freedom of play in the affair. Beyond this general rule, one further suggestion has to be offered. It should be absolutely laid down that a quarrel has not answered its rational purpose unless it leaves the parties better friends than before.

That is the great justifiable use of disagreeing. What rational purpose can people have in quarrelling except that they may agree better afterwards? Indeed, how can you fully agree with a man until you have differed from him? No friendship, no affection, is perfect without a quarrel having taken place between the parties. By this we mean something very different from the summer-tiffs between lovers, which, for the greater part, are only hypocrisies. These young folks pretend to disagree for the mere purpose of displaying in the eyes of other people their power over one another. To quarrel is the final seal of familiarity, with these trivial, preposterous, delightful individuals. So, again, a great proportion of the disturbances made by very juvenile personages may be set down as utterly insincere. A loud quarrel is the only means the light insignificant creatures have of making themselves of any social importance. They want notice, so they brawl for it. For similar reasons, we unhesitatingly strike out of the category of useful quarrelling all the habitual perfunctory excitements of a class of mean-minded persons who quarrel in turn with everybody, systematically, of pre-arranged design. In their case, it means simply a periodical self-inflation; it is their way, like the children, of commanding the publicity they can secure in no other fashion. Some of these ridiculous individuals have positively developed a bastard art of quarrelling, which they practise as other simpletons do dram-drinking. What they really aim at in quarrelling is a pompous reconciliation, for the effecting of which they have a cumbrous apparatus of mutual friends, letters of explanation, and absurd forms of semi-retraction. The right method of treating them is never to indulge them with the gratification of a disagreement; the point of skill being to do that without agreeing with them either. Doing neither the one nor the other places them in a state of bewilderment, their wits not being equal to the understanding an able,

utterly indifferent neutrality. The improving, perfecting quarrels we have spoken of are grave, unplanned, surprising difficulties arising between sensible people, against the wish of both parties, and which, at one stage, fatally jeopardise all prospects. If these persons, be they either friends, lovers, or husband and wife, come safely out of one of these entanglements, either having fully cleared it up, or entirely satisfied one another that it must always remain more or less unexplained, but that although both are to blame in some degree, each still is true, there is nothing so enriches subsequent life. In very noble instances, a gentle mysterious falling-short of full explanation may have advantages of its own over a blank and bald clearing-up. Room is given for trust and magnanimity, for admiration and thankfulness.

The last, perfect stage is reached when, after a sufficient experience of this kind, the quarrellers not only know that things will have to end in a reconciliation, but they are aware beforehand that neither will be found much to blame when all right allowances have been made. The art of quarrelling then becomes Christian. A scientific persuasion of the mind, as well as a loving impulse of the heart, causes perfection not to be looked for, but in its place a dearer, sweeter human coming short. By generous mutual allowances, a mean of character is well appreciated; an average rightness of intention, a partial success in its fulfilment, satisfies, is regarded as a victory. There are some couples in this happy state. A silver-haired old lady, with better blush-roses in her cheeks than those of youth, was once condoled with after a vigorous colloquy with her ancient husband in his study. 'What!' she said, with an amazed twinkle of the dear blue eyes—'orbs that in the progress of years had grown so bright she had to subdue them with spectacles—'do you think I have been talking so angrily with John? Nonsense! It is his Monday's headache I have been arguing with; and it is astonishing how well it can argue. But a little opposition does it good.'

Our inquiry seems to resolve itself into these conclusions: First, it should be always borne in mind that in the case of the simplest quarrel there are three parties to it, circumstances forming one, which generally is opposed to the other two; secondly, reconciliation should be thorough, loving, and rendered as elegant as may be. These conditions observed, the world may quarrel as it likes.

#### UNDER THE SEAT.

'SMOKING-CARRIAGE, sir?' asked the tip-expecting porter, as he bore my rugs and minor packages along the platform. I said yes, and he made me comfortable, and received his sixpence. Then the guard came to look after my well-being, but got nothing more than innocent gratitude, which was perhaps all he desired. I have no doubt that I did him injustice in attributing his efforts to induce a fat old gentleman with a cough; a lean old gentleman who was snuffy; and a middle-aged gentleman enveloped in wraps, the lower part of whose face was covered up like a female Turk's, an evident window-shutter, to enter my carriage, in order to spite me.

Duty to his employers alone made him endeavour

to fill up, but the British anxiety to get as much room as possible for my money was strong within me, and stirred uncharitable suspicions.

You may lead a horse to the water, or an anti-nicotinian old gentleman to a smoking-carriage, but you can't make him get in: and when each in turn put his head into my compartment, he jibbed, for some late occupants of it had been cigar, not pipe smokers, and it was rather strong. So I was apparently left alone—alone with the *Times*, and all the comic weeklies, and a modern poem.

The doors were banged, the engine whistled, the train began to move. It would not stop again till we got to Peterborough, so that I was safe to be undisturbed so far. There were six seats, and I could occupy as many of them as a limited number of members permitted. I almost wished myself an Octopus, to take full advantage of the situation. Calming down, I hung up my hat, put on a gaudy piece of needle-work won in a bazaar raffle, lit my pipe, cut my papers, and began to enjoy myself.

I sat in the left-hand corner, with my back to the engine, absorbed in a big lawsuit. It is great fun to read a cross-examination, and watch how a clever lawyer will make an honest man perjure himself. 'It reads almost like a crime,' I remarked aloud; 'but then it is an honourable, lawful, and beneficial crime. Soldiers kill people's bodies, lawyers kill people's reputations, all for the good of society in the long-run.'

While I was uttering the word 'Run,' my ankles were grasped suddenly and firmly; then, before I could recover from the shock, they were jerked backwards under the seat with such force that I was thrown forwards, sprawling. I tried to rise, but my right wrist was seized, and the arm twisted till I was helpless, and presently I found myself on the floor of the carriage, face downwards, a sharp knee being scientifically pressed into the small of my back, and both arms fixed behind me. My elbows were tied together, and then the knee was removed, and my ankles were secured. During this latter operation, I kicked and struggled.

'Hum!' said a deliberative voice, 'that will be awkward. Let's see; ah, these will do.'

'These' were my sticks and umbrella, which some one proceeded to apply as splints to the backs of my legs, using the straps which had kept them in a bundle to fix them at the ankle and above the knee. When he had done, I was as helpless as a trussed turkey.

Then I was turned over carefully and tenderly, and for the first time saw my assailant.

He was a gentlemanly looking man, dressed in a black coat and waistcoat, gray trousers, and neck-cloth. His hair and whiskers were just turning grizzly, his chin and upper lip were clean shaved. His forehead was high, his eyes prominent and fixed in their expression, his nose aquiline, his mouth a slit. He was of middle height, spare but wiry; indeed his muscles must have been exceptionally elastic and feline, for you would never have thought, to look at him, that he could stow himself away under the seat of a railway carriage so compactly.

He contemplated me, with his chin in his right hand, and his right elbow on his left hand, and said thoughtfully: 'Just so. All for the good of society in the long-run—an admirable sentiment,

my dear sir; let it be a consolation to you, if I should cause you any little annoyance.'

He took a shagreen spectacle-case from his pocket, wiped the glasses carefully with a silk handkerchief, and adjusted them on his nose. Then he produced an oblong box, which he unlocked, and placed on one of the seats. After which he sat down quietly in the place I had occupied five minutes before, a position which brought him close over my head and chest, as I lay supine and helpless at his feet.

'Do you know anything of anatomy?' he asked. I was as completely in his power as a witness in the cross-examining counsel's, and prudence dictated that I should be equally ready to answer the most frivolous and impertinent questions with politeness. I said that I did not.

'Ah!' he said; 'well, perhaps you may have heard of the spleen? Exactly. Now, science has never as yet been able to find out the use of that organ, and the man who bequeathed that knowledge to posterity, would rank with the discoverer of the circulation of the blood, and confer an inestimable benefit on humanity for the remainder of the world's lease. I propose to dissect you.'

'You will not get much glory by that,' said I, forcing myself to seem to take this outrageous practical joke in good part. 'An ungrateful generation may or may not profit by your discoveries, but it will infallibly hang you.'

'Not so,' he blandly replied. 'I am a surgeon, who once had a very considerable practice, but I had to stand my trial for an experiment, which proved fatal, on one of my patients. The jury, unable to understand the sacrifices which an earnest inquirer is ever ready to offer at the shrine of science, declared me mad, and I was placed in confinement. You see that I can act with impunity.'

And he opened the box. I broke out in a cold sweat. Was it all real? Could the man be in earnest? 'But,' said I, 'surely you can get dead bodies to dissect, without having recourse to a crime? And again, if generations of anatomists have failed, in twenty thousand investigations, to discover the use of the spleen—if you yourself have always failed hitherto, why should you suppose that this one attempt should be more successful than the others?'

'Because, my dear sir,' said the man, with the smile of one who has caught a bright idea, 'all former investigations, including my own, have been made on dead subjects, while I propose to examine your vital organs with a powerful magnifying-glass, while they are exercising their normal functions.'

'What!' I gasped. 'You will never have the barbarity'—And here my voice choked.

'O yes; I have conquered that prejudice against inflicting suffering which is natural to the mind enfeebled by civilisation. For many years, I secretly practised vivisection upon animals: I once had a cat, an animal very tenacious of life, under my scalpel for a week. But we have no time to waste in conversation. You will not be put to any needless suffering; these instruments are not my own, blunted for want of use; I took the precaution of borrowing the case of the gentleman under whose care I have been placed, before making my escape.'

While speaking thus, he took out the hideous little glittering instruments, and examined them



one by one. They were of various appalling shapes, and I gazed upon them with the horrible fascination of a bird under the power of a snake. Of one only could I tell the use: a thin, trenchant blade, which cut you almost to look at it. He knelt across me, arranged his implements on the seat to his right; laid a note-book, pencil, and his watch on that to his left, and took off my neckcloth and collar, murmuring: 'The clothes are very much in my way; I wish that you were properly prepared for the operation.'

It flashed across me, in my despair, that I had heard of madmen being foiled by an apparent acquiescence in their murderous intentions.

'After all,' I forced myself to say, 'what is one life to the benefit of the human race? Since mine is demanded by science, let me aid you. Remove these bonds, and allow me to take off my coat and waistcoat.'

He smiled, and shook his head.

'Life is sweet; I will not trust you,' he said, unfastening my waistcoat, and turning back the lapels as far as he could. Then taking a pair of scissors, he proceeded to cut my shirt-front away, so that presently my chest was bared to his experiments. Whether I closed my eyes, or was seized with vertigo, I do not know, but for a moment or two I lost sight of everything, and had visions; a sort of grotesque nightmare it was, the figures in which I recall but very indistinctly; but I remember that the most prominent of them was a pig, or rather a pork, hanging up outside a butcher's shop, the appearance of which bore a mysterious resemblance to myself. These delirious fantasies were dispelled by a sharp pang; the anatomist had made a first slight incision. I saw his calm face leaning over me; the cruel blade with which he was about to make another and a deeper cut; his fingers, already crimson with my blood; and I struggled frantically. My operator immediately withdrew his armed hand, and stood erect. Then, watching his opportunity, he placed his right foot on the lower part of my breast-bone, so that by pressure he could suffocate me.

'Listen, my friend,' he said: 'I will endeavour not to injure any vital organ, but if you wriggle about, I shall not be able to avoid doing so. Another thing, if you'—

He was interrupted by three sharp whistles from the engine, so shrill and piercing as to drown his voice.

'Impede me by these absurd convulsive movements, I shall be compelled to sever those muscles, which'—

He never completed his sentence. There was a mighty shock, a crash as if all the worlds had rushed together. I was shot under the seat, where I lay uninjured, and in safety, amidst the most horrible din; breaking, tearing, shrieking, cries for help, and the roar of escaping steam.

I had strained the bonds which secured my elbows in my struggles, and the jerk of the collision snapped them; so that when I began to get my wits together, I found my hands free. To liberate my legs was then a very easy matter, but not so to extricate myself, the next thing I set about. The whole top of the carriage, from where the stuffed cushion part ends, was carried sheer away; and amidst the debris which encumbered my movements lay the mangled and decapitated body of the madman who, intending to assail my life, had, by

keeping me down at the bottom of the carriage, saved it.

MORAL.—When alone in a railway carriage, it may be worth while to take a look below the seats!

### TRAP-DOOR SPIDERS.

WHEN residing at Mentone in the spring of last year, I found some degree of amusement in that pretty but rather dull resort of health-seekers by accompanying a young English gentleman, Mr J. Traherne Moggridge, in some of his excursions in quest of trap-door spiders. Until this time—such was my ignorance of this branch of natural history—I was not aware that spiders with a capacity for constructing underground dwellings with doors were to be found anywhere in Europe. The explanations of Mr Moggridge let in a flood of light on the subject. He had resided in Mentone winter after winter for several successive years, devoting himself to explorations concerning the flora of this charming part of the Riviera, and now had entered on more interesting inquiries regarding the habits of the ants and spiders in the neighbourhood. What he told me about these animals awakened curiosity, and I gladly seized the opportunity of going on a spider-hunting expedition along the braes behind the town, amidst orange and lemon gardens. There was no sort of difficulty in these rambles. Here and there are narrow winding pathways, and from one terrace to another there are usually convenient though rudely formed flights of steps.

What we more immediately sought for were spider-dwellings, which were discovered in the green mossy turf which partly constituted the walls that bank up the terraces. In walking along, no ordinary stranger could imagine that he was in a street of spider-houses. No spider was visible. It was noon, with blazing sunshine. The animals were reposing in their cavernous domiciles, and the doors were shut. I remember the pleasure I experienced in coming upon the first dwelling. 'Here is one,' exclaimed my young friend. So saying, he, with a penknife, gently opened a neatly formed door, which led into the tube-like domicile. The door was about the size of a split pea, round in shape, flat and smooth on the inner side, and covered on the outer side with the kind of moss which grew around, so as to be indistinguishable from the general surface when shut. But the most extraordinary thing of all was the hinge. It seemed to be formed of some glutinous and flexible material, by which the door was attached to the edge of the orifice. There was another thing to wonder at. The door was provided with a bevelled flange to keep out the rain, nicely adjusted to the opening of the tube; and the whole structure could be compared to nothing more aptly than the well-fitting lid of a Highlander's snuff-mull. Walking on, other trap-doors were discovered, some smaller, some larger, the largest being nearly the size of a waistcoat button. It appeared as if the smaller doors belonged to the houses of young spiders just beginning the world, from which as they advanced in life they removed to dwellings of grander dimensions.

The fabrication of these little round doors with their hinges, their ingenious flanges, their cover of growing moss, must, I thought, be a great business in the spider community; of course, there

is no cost for materials, only trouble and consideration. The substance of the doors, as far as I could see, consisted of earth agglutinated by a secretion from the animal, and hardened to endure daily tear and wear. And the rounding is so beautifully executed, that it could not have been done better by the most skilled workman of the 'Turners' Company,' which is saying a good deal. As regards the hinge, it is evidently a kind of silky material, which the spiders spin for the purpose of lining their nests, and therefore somewhat analogous to the well-known spiders' webs.

The exceeding drollery of the thing inclined me to give some account of these trap-door spiders; but on learning that Mr Moggridge was engaged in preparing a work on the subject, I relinquished the intention, and left him, as much better qualified, to bring the matter explicitly and with scientific accuracy under public notice. His book is just published. It goes beyond what was anticipated, for with needful particulars about the trap-door spiders of the Riviera, it includes an equally interesting description of some remarkable ants which are found in that quarter.\* With what quiet satisfaction one can turn from social and political dissensions to a contemplation of Divine wisdom displayed in the habits of creatures ordinarily treated with indifference, but whose constructive ability and forethought ought to excite the highest admiration.

Our author does not write as a cabinet naturalist, but as an observer of what has come distinctly under his notice *in situ*; and his work, therefore, forms an important contribution to our general knowledge of the *Arachnides* and *Formica*. After briefly referring to what was long ago discovered respecting the trap-door spiders of Jamaica, Corsica, and Italy, he proceeds to speak of two new types of these animals, which he has found at Mentone and Cannes. The dwellings of all consist of cylindrical tubes lined with a silky substance to keep them dry and comfortable; the tubes being artificial perforations in sloping banks of a soft friable material. A principal peculiarity in the Riviera spider-houses is that they are often more complex and highly finished than those found elsewhere. Instead of being no more than a single tube sloping downwards from the surface, they are frequently provided with a branch, or side-tube, sloping upwards about half-way down. Such a side-tube is a cul-de-sac, and forms as it were a spare room which is required by the exigencies of the occupant. To understand the special purpose of these side-tubes, we have to bear in mind that the inmate is exposed to sundry natural enemies, such as ichneumons, wasps, centipedes, and small lizards. As a defence against these depredators, the dwelling has a strong outer door, so carefully concealed by growing plants, or otherwise, as not easily to be discovered. The aforesaid enemies, however, after minute investigation, do occasionally find out the door, and try to open it. For an attack of this dangerous nature, the spider is prepared. He lays himself down inside the door, and with back, legs, and mandibles, endeavours to prevent intrusion. If the intruder gets the door opened, the spider retreats, and taking refuge in

the side-tube, leaves the enemy to plunge to the bottom. Being there disappointed in not finding his prey, he perhaps returns to find out the spider's place of retreat. In this inquiry he is effectually baffled, for the side-branch is provided with a door, which the spider has shut behind him, and keeps it closed against all attempts to open it. To shew that this is no exaggeration of what probably happens, we quote the following passages.

'When digging out these nests, after carefully removing the upper portion, I have frequently seen the lower door move across, and block up the main tube in a mysterious manner, it being in reality pushed by the spider from below, and she may sometimes be captured at her post, with her back set against the door. . . . Let us suppose, however, that one of her natural enemies has found its way into the nest, and is crawling down the tube. What will probably happen? Why, in the first place, the spider will slam the second door in the face of the intruder, and then, if worsted in the pushing-match which follows, quickly draw this door back again, and run up into the safety-branch, when the enemy, after descending precipitately to the bottom of the main tube, will look in vain for the spider as it searches its way up for the secret passage, now closed by its trap-door.' This seems a feasible explanation of the use of these side-branches. Mr Moggridge does not think it probable that they are designed as places of safety for eggs, because they are found in the nests of very young spiders.

With respect to the jealous care taken to guard the street-door from intrusion, our author says: 'One might suppose, from what has often been repeated as to the habits of the *Nemesia cementaria*, that whenever any one attempts to open the door, the spider, which is always at home in the daytime, would dart up from the bottom of the tube, and endeavour to keep it closed by holding on from within. I cannot say what may take place during the summer months; but from October to May, I have but rarely found one of these spiders ready to oppose me, though *Nemesia meridionales* and *N. Eleonora* frequently did so. Many times, wishing to provoke them, I have tapped at the door, in order to apprise the occupant of my arrival, or lifted it and let it fall again, and always in vain, though the spider was there, crouching at the bottom of the tube. Indeed, I can only recall six or eight instances in which this spider did hold down the door, and in three of these she was captured.' It would thus appear that certain species are more valiant than others; or that possibly the opposition offered to intruders may be due to the fact of there being at the time some young to be defended.

In constructing its outer door, the spider usually disguises it with a covering to harmonise with the adjoining surface. 'Perhaps in no case is the concealment more complete than when dead leaves are employed to cover the door. In some cases a single withered olive leaf only is spun in, and suffices to cover the trap; in others, several are woven together with bits of wood and roots.' The tools with which the animal excavates its dwelling to a depth of from eight to ten inches, and provides it with doors, consist of powerful mandibles bent downwards with a claw at the end, and generally with bristles on its lower side. As there are enemies abroad during the day, the spider may be presumed to prefer carrying on his outdoor labours

\* *Harvesting Ants and Trap-door Spiders.* By J. Traherne Moggridge, F.L.S. L. Reeve & Co. London. 1 vol. 8vo. with plates. 1873.

by moon or star light. To aid him in such nocturnal avocations, nature has beneficently given him eight eyes, two of them larger than the others, by which he is enabled to exercise all suitable vigilance in circumventing the manoeuvres of his enemies.

The notice which we have been able to take of this most interesting volume may not only draw the attention of naturalists to its contents, but stimulate observation in distant colonial possessions reached by these pages. Mr Moggridge refers to certain trap-door spiders in Australia. 'Lady Parker,' he says, 'told me of some black trap-door spiders which were so common about Paramatta, near Sydney, that scarcely any one paid attention to them, and which might habitually be seen out on the garden-paths in the daytime near their holes, to which they would run in all haste when alarmed. The eye of the passer-by was attracted by the open doors, which were about the size of a sixpence, and fall over backward when the spider makes her exit, but when closed, on her return, they fit so neatly that it is extremely difficult to detect them.' Perhaps what we have said may be the means of suggesting an intellectual recreation to the numerous English health-seekers who yearly resort for several months to the shores of the Mediterranean.

It might be well also to pay some attention to the ants of the Riviera. On this branch of his subject, Mr Moggridge offers not only valuable hints for the guidance of inquirers, but clears up a matter on which there has been no end of controversy. As is well known, serious doubts have been entertained regarding the proverbial foresight of ants in gathering food for the winter. That the ants found in Northern Europe possess this foresight, is peremptorily disputed. It is alleged that the small white objects which the creatures are seen hurrying away with in their mouths, are not grain at all, but only their own young. And to fortify the truth of the allegation, it is represented that, considering the torpid state in which ants usually pass the winter, they do not need to exercise the provident habits ordinarily imputed to them. Mr Moggridge settles the point in favour of the old Biblical idea. He shews that when Solomon recommended the sluggard to take a lesson from the ant, 'which, having no guide, overseer, or ruler, provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest,' he spoke the literal truth, as regards the foresight and industry of these little creatures. The proofs advanced of this view of the matter are derived from a long series of patient personal investigations, and are apparently incontestable. In the Riviera there are (to speak popularly) four kinds of harvesting ants. Closely studying the operations of these animals—chiefly the *Atta barbara* and the *Atta structor*—whose habitations are amidst the lemon terraces, it was observed that they habitually gathered the small seeds of plants, and stored them in granaries connected with their nests. In the operation there was a division of labour. Some of the ants climbed up the stalks of growing plants, and shook down the seeds, which were carried off by others to the appointed repository. There was no particular nicety in securing the seeds. Anything which seemed edible would do.

Reflecting on this circumstance, Mr Moggridge thought he would play a trick upon the ants. Here

is his account of the affair: 'It sometimes happens that an ant has manifestly made a bad selection, and is told on its return that what it has brought home with much pains is no better than rubbish, and is hustled out of the nest, and is forced to throw its burden away. In order to try whether these creatures were not fallible like other mortals, I one day took with me a little packet of gray and white porcelain beads, and scattered these in the path of the harvesting train. They had scarcely lain a minute on the earth before one of the largest workers seized upon a bead, and with some difficulty clipped it with its mandibles and trotted back at a great rate to the nest. I waited for a little while, my attention being divided between the other ants, who were vainly endeavouring to remove the beads, and the entrance down which the worker had disappeared, and then left the spot. On my return in an hour's time, I found the ants passing unconcernedly by and over the beads, which lay where I had strewn them, in apparently undiminished quantities; and I conclude from this that they had found out the mistake, and had wisely returned to their accustomed occupations.' He adds: 'I have often amused myself by strewing hemp and canary seed or oats, all of which form heavy burdens for the ants, near their nests; and it is a curious sight to watch the eagerness and determination with which they will drag them away. It is interesting also to note how on the following day the husks of these seeds will appear on the rubbish-heap, outside the entrance to the nest.'

With this amount of discrimination, the ants fight tremendous battles, colony against colony, in the endeavour to plunder each other's granaries. At times, these combats last for days, and terrible mutilations are the result. Two ants may be noticed contending for a seed, one of them holding on with the tenacity of a bull-dog, even although he has lost his abdomen in the struggle. Then, says Mr Moggridge, 'the victor will be seen dragging away his prize, while his adversary, though now little more than a head and legs, offers a vigorous, though, of course, ineffectual resistance.' On one occasion, a battle was seen to last thirty-one days. At the termination of such desperate engagements, the field is strewn with the slain, which are carried away and eaten as part of the spoil.

To expeditions which end in these murderous conflicts, are added thievish raids on seed-stores which happen to be in the neighbourhood. The ant communities are not in the least particular as to whence they can steal grain, hemp-seed, canary-seed, or any other suitable nutriment; and they have an extraordinary cleverness in discovering where food is to be got for the taking. They know where there are shops in Mentone for the sale of grain. A flourishing colony of the *Atta structor* ingeniously planted itself at the door of a corn-chandler, and 'were ever on the outlook for stray grains of oats and wheat, which might chance to fall from the sacks. Another nest, in a different part of the town, got its principal substance from the grains of canary-seed, which were scattered by the birds occupying a cage hanging outside a shop-window.'

The dimensions of an ant's granary are described as about the size of a gentleman's watch. There, all sorts of plundered seeds are stored for winter use—or, more correctly, for the seasons when no seeds are growing; for there is little or no winter in the Riviera, such as we know by that term. In



the matter of storing, however, we have to meet a difficulty. The granaries being only a few inches under the surface of the ground, how do the ants manage to prevent the seeds from germinating, and becoming useless for food? Ancient authors account for the phenomenon, by stating that the ants bore holes through the grains, so as to destroy the vital principle. What ants may have done thousands of years ago in Greece and some eastern countries, we may not dispute; but it is plain that the ants of the Riviera dismiss the boring system, and go to work in a manner which shews their skill in chemistry. This, perhaps, is the funniest thing told by Mr Moggridge. Will it be believed?—they actually malt their grain! When the seeds have duly sprouted, the ants nip off the radicle or fibril to check the growth, and then carry out the grain to be dried in the open air. The seeds are thus malted. The starch is changed into sugar, and, so transformed, the food is eaten with becoming relish. 'I have myself,' says our author, 'witnessed the avidity with which the contents of seeds thus treated are devoured by the ants.' If the ants in old times did not understand the process of malting, the modern ones may be congratulated on their advancement in this piece of useful knowledge.

The ceaseless diligence of these ant communities is testified by the fact, that they have been discovered working in the dark, carrying seeds to their granaries, or searching for aphides from the orange-trees, just as if it were broad day. Need we say, how gratifying it is to see substantiated the ancient saws about ants and their wonderful foresight? Mr Moggridge has done a real service to literature by giving these simple and trustworthy details. Expensive as the getting-up of the book must have been, on account of its numerous coloured plates, it bears the unpretentious character of one who is modest in literary enterprise, from which and other circumstances, we cannot but think that it merits a hearty approval.

W. C.

## MURPHY'S MASTER.

### CHAPTER XIX.—THE EMBARKATION.

'I'm here!' observed a dogged voice presently; not as a warning that there was a spectator of the fond pair's rapture (which indeed they already had in Mary), but as a hint that he had been overlooked.

'Oh, Jim, of course,' said Robert, a little awkwardly, but shaking him all the more warmly by the hand, to make up for the neglect.

Jim was not improved in appearance since the old forest days. He had that slouching, defiant look which is acquired from habitual conflict with the law, and he looked dissatisfied besides. 'This ain't much of a place,' said he, 'to come to, across the world, considering how you've cracked it up. There is not a tree as I can see, and where the game's to come from'—

'O Jim! how can you,' broke in Lizzy tearfully, 'after what your mother said!' She was not easily moved to tears, as Robert knew, but he had perceived that she was in deep mourning, and guessed the cause, which had prevented him from asking after her mother.

'O yes,' continued Jim, 'it's all very fine for you, who have your young man here, which is all

you want. But what I want to know is, Why we're here? Why didn't we stay in Melbourne, where we should have been right enough, and Robert have joined us there, instead of?'—

'I could not join you there,' interposed Robert gravely. 'I wish I could have done so. It is a long sad story. This place is all you think of it, James, and much, much worse'—

'Hush, hush!' interposed Mary warningly, and pointing to the door of the other room that made up the cottage, and in which the rest of the Beamish family were asleep. 'Tell him all that another time—not here: it is not safe. Take them both over to your house to breakfast.'

'You have sense in your head, young woman,' observed Jim approvingly.

'And kindness in her heart, I am sure,' added Lizzy gratefully. 'She has been so kind to me, Robert!'

'Don't speak of that, miss,' said Mary; 'it was only fortunate that I happened to have been asked to stay with some friends at the harbour for a few days, and so chanced to be there last night when you arrived. I knew that my mother's roof, such as it is, would give you welcome, and I also knew that Mr Chesney here would have gone mad, if you did not come to New Town. Both Maguire and Murphy, sir' (turning to Robert), 'looked very black at me, but, thanks to you, I have my own way with everybody now.'

And so it was. The Governor in noway molested her, but his craze of imagining her to be his consort, made her much 'looked up to' by the colony in general; while after the lesson that Maguire had received, he scrupulously avoided her presence, though without doubt awaiting his own day of recompense.

A few hours put Robert in possession of all that had happened to Lizzy since he sailed to seek what he now felt to be indeed his ill-starred fortune. Her mother had succumbed to the illness of which she had written to him while at Liverpool, and that loss to the orphaned girl had been more deplorable, since it rendered her more subject to the hateful solicitations of John Rowland. Her brother indeed remained to her, but it was easy to see, though Lizzy strove to disguise it, that he had not played the part of guardian as he should have done. Perhaps he was too much in Rowland's power to do so; perhaps he was not unwilling to become allied by marriage with one who could not only screen his offences, but offer him great opportunities for indulging in his favourite pursuit. At all events, it was plain that poor Lizzy had been greatly persecuted. Love alone could scarcely have accounted for the rapture which she now evinced in having found a home, which, humble though it was, was subject to no intrusion, or for the happy confidence she shewed in Robert's protecting arm. He had not the heart to fully disclose to her how weak that arm really was; and indeed it would have been hard to convince his hearers, fresh from the well-ordered glades of Windsor, of the abnormal and anarchic condition of things on *Murphy's Island*, and of the perils from a mad despot in the one case, from a revengeful traitor in the other, in which they stood. What he told them did but make Jim more than ever curse his fate in having quitted, first England, and then Melbourne, for 'this cursed island;' a very natural, but at the same time an ungenerous expression of feeling,



whereat Robert winced ; while, on the other hand, it made Lizzy nestle in his arms the closer, whose dear embrace filled him with trembling fears. When he bethought him now, that for his sake, and at his invitation, she had come to such a perilous spot, her very beauty sent a chill to his heart. She was more beautiful even than when he had seen her last, and as he had so often pictured her, while absent. She was no longer the tall and slender girl that had hung upon his neck in passionate farewell but six months ago, but a graceful woman. Her simple mourning dress became her admirably ; the one black ribbon that confined her plentiful soft brown hair was, in his eyes at least, more attractive than a circlet of pearls ; the small white collar about her shapely throat embellished it better than a diamond necklace, save that the latter would have less concealed its charms. Her pearls and diamonds were in her eyes, from which the happy tears would gather at his words of love and comfort, to be kissed away by his long stunted lips. And yet one of that reunited pair, at least, was well aware that it was no time for courtship and love-passages ; and how to escape from *Murphy's Island* was the one thought that occupied him whenever he dared to think. Notwithstanding that when she was out of his sight, he always trembled for Lizzy's safety, he did not omit once a day to put to sea as usual in his little boat, and coast round to the opposite side of the island, where alone he could hope to catch sight of some passing sail. He would have taken Lizzy with him, had he dared, but fraught with danger as his position was in any case, to have infringed Kavanagh's edict would, he felt, be at once to draw down on him—or, what was worse, on her—the pent-up vengeance of Maguire. That Kavanagh, if not won over by the latter, was at all events growing more and more unfavourable towards himself, was only too plain ; not only was he still forbidden to approach the harbour, but the permission he had applied for, to give up his own residence to Lizzy and her brother, had been coldly—perhaps cynically—denied to him, as being derogatory to Robert's position as Lieutenant-governor. Under pretence of being his servant, however, Jim was allowed to have a lodging under his roof, a privilege only granted perhaps because it was known that it would not add to his own domestic comfort. James Alston indeed had shewn himself little less than an enemy of Robert's. He spoke ill of him, or, at all events, in dissatisfied and grumbling terms, throughout the island ; and was in consequence received into open favour with Murphy, and, as was whispered, by Maguire himself. Another, though less particular reason for his being 'taken up with,' by the former at least, was his love for drink, which, always manifest in him, had become on the island, where strong liquor was only too easily procurable, very pronounced indeed. He would come home from the harbour drunk, to the Lieutenant-governor's residence, and behave not only with disrespect, but in the most offensive manner, to Lizzy's inexpressible concern : at last, coming home one evening more intoxicated than usual, when his sister and Robert chanced to be taking a walk together, and finding the boat as usual drawn up upon the beach, he launched it, and paddled out to sea. Robert saw him from the shore, and hurried home, not daring to communicate to Lizzy the apprehensions that audacious act inspired within him ; but the

mischief had been done. Even if the fact of this contravention of the law could have been concealed through the good-nature of those who witnessed it—which was more than doubtful, since Jim had rendered himself far from popular in New Town—the culprit would have thrown away that chance, for he boasted openly of the deed, affirming in one breath that he was an Englishman, who owed no obedience to Kavanagh or any other 'Irish body,' and in the next, that Murphy and Maguire were hand-in-glove with him, and would see he did not come to harm.

The next morning, he was seized under Chesney's roof, and carried off to the harbour, where the latter dared not follow him : the arrest itself might have been made, and very likely was so, with the very intention of thus getting the Lieutenant-governor into the net of despotic law ; and though he would have run the risk had he himself only stood in peril, he dared not do so with Lizzy dependent on him. Moreover, he did not anticipate any very severe sentence upon Alston, from the fact of his connection with Murphy. Lizzy, however, was beyond measure alarmed and solicitous upon her brother's account, and at once hastened over with Mary Beamish to Government House. With Kavanagh she was sternly denied an interview ; but Maguire coolly informed her that if her brother's life was spared it would be so, as Robert's had been, on the condition that he should make a disclosure of certain state secrets, and in the meantime, he was to remain in prison. To Lizzy this was inexplicable, but Robert understood but too well what it meant : James Alston was to be kept in confinement, with the fear of death hanging over him, until he should confess to some treasonable words spoken by the Lieutenant-governor ; and indeed, when in company with his sister, he had heard Robert speak frankly enough, and needed no imagination to invent them. Whether he should have the baseness to betray them, was at present doubtful ; but the one thing certain, whether as regarded the prisoner's fate or his own, was, that not a moment was to be lost in leaving the island. The state of affairs had become intolerable, and must be put an end to at all risks. He could now handle the little boat with ease, whether with sail or oar ; and small as she was, had acquired great confidence in her. So long as the sea was tolerably smooth—and it was now fair weather—he felt that she would float well enough ; though anything like a gale would without doubt sink her. He knew his course to Melbourne, and made up his mind to tempt the dangers of the deep, though it was but in a cockle-shell, rather than trust any longer to the caprice of a madman or the mercy of a villain. He had small hope indeed of reaching the mainland in such a craft ; but it was not impossible, could he keep her above water, that he might fall in with some passing vessel : in that case, no matter what she was, nor whither she was bound, help for Lizzy would surely be obtained, for had he not about him the money wherewith to purchase it ! At any moment he might be himself arrested, or the permission to enter the boat withdrawn from him, and even this last desperate plan be thereby entirely frustrated ; so he set about his arrangements at once. His glass, his compass, and his map he disinterred from their hiding-place, and concealed them in the gig ; he also stored an abundance of water and

provisions ready to place on board of it at the last moment. But he could not go—he had not the heart to do so—without acquainting Lizzy with his intention.

‘It is a wild and desperate hazard, darling,’ said he, having set before her both the perils that he was about to flee from, and those which he must needs incur; ‘but it is the last chance left to me, and I must take it.’

‘Take it,’ cried she, ‘and may Heaven prosper it; but if you love me, Robert, grant me one thing: take me with you!’

At this proposition, Chesney was greatly alarmed and distressed. He had expected arguments against his own departure, but this sympathetic compliance with it embarrassed him far more than opposition could have done. The idea was hopeless, preposterous. To dare the ocean in so frail a bark himself, he knew to be perilous in excess; but to permit one so delicate and precious to share that peril, was not to be thought of. And yet she pleaded hard, and not without some show of argument and good sense.

‘I could say, Robert, that without you, and knowing the dangers to which you were exposed, life would be here intolerable to me; I could say that, left without your protection, I would rather die than trust myself to the tender mercies of such men as Maguire and Murphy, who would at once guess that you had taken flight, and take vengeance upon poor me, who would alone be within their power; but you have thought of these things yourself, I know, though you have been silent on them for my sake. Let me remind you rather of what you have forgotten: how useful my poor help may be to you. I know nothing of the sea, it is true, but on the river, remember, I have learned to manage both sail and tiller; the little boat will trim no worse, but the better for my weight, and even for the greater quantity of provisions that my presence may make necessary. If you perish, let me perish with you, which would be more merciful to me than to bid me live on; and if, through Heaven’s mercy, we escape, let us escape together.’

Such were, in brief, her arguments, which backed by tears and kisses, in the end prevailed on her lover to carry her with him. As Robert had access to the provision store, the preliminary arrangements were soon completed, and the very next evening was fixed upon for the adventure. It was necessary to delay till after dusk, in order that they should elude the pinnace, which, without doubt, would instantly be sent after them. But with eight hours or so of clear start, Robert hoped that he would elude pursuit; once out of sight of the island, he would be safe: not even Maguire was capable of shaping his course to Melbourne without the aid of a compass, and fortunately enough, there was none such on the island save that which Robert possessed. The date of the fugitive’s escape was delayed by a curious circumstance. Robert, who had purposely avoided Lizzy’s company for some hours, in order to avoid suspicion, was alone in his house, making a few final preparations, when suddenly a violent report shook the frail tenement, so that the glass fell from the windows, and everything on the shelves was thrown to the ground. The whole population of the village were in the street in an instant, to seek the explanation of the phenomenon, which they deemed as before to proceed from the explosion of some gigantic piece of ordnance; for

the sky was without a cloud, and no indication of thunder was to be felt in the atmosphere, which was serene and cool. Lucy herself, accompanied by Mary Beamish, ran across to Robert’s house, and, with joyful cries, averred that some ship of war was nearing the harbour. He met them at the door, with an excited but unjoyful face.

‘The sentry is still on the hill-top,’ said he, ‘which shews that he has seen no ship. My belief is that it is’—before he could say ‘an earthquake,’ another shock took place, even more violent than before, and accompanied by a strange appearance in the sea; the waves were rising and roaring upon the shore like water that is about to boil.

‘The boat, the boat!’ cried he, and rushed down to the spot where it was beached, a little remote from the village, followed by the two young women. With their assistance he was able to drag it up far higher on the shore; but they were only just in time. The waves, gathering strength and volume every moment, swept over the very place where it had lain in a few minutes, and one even, the sixth and largest, caught themselves as they fled uphill before it; they escaped, however, with a thorough wetting, and the boat being laden, was too heavy to be dragged down by its recoil. After the sixth wave, the sea went back again to its usual limits, but continued greatly disturbed. The houses in New Town were all more or less damaged, and one or two swept away: though there were no lives lost, the people were in a state of great perplexity and alarm, which Robert in vain attempted to allay by assuring them that the earthquake was over. He could convince none except Lizzy and Mary, who had been greatly impressed by his sagacity in respect to the danger that menaced the boat; although he was solely indebted for his knowledge to a narrative he had somewhere read of the great earthquake at Lisbon, where the waves had risen and swallowed up the land. Now was the time, when men’s minds were occupied with vague terrors, and disinclined to concern themselves with the affairs of others, for the fugitives to put their plan into execution: at nightfall, accordingly, by which hour the sea had resumed its former calm, Robert and Lizzy stole out to where they had left the boat, and proceeded to push it down the hill. As they were thus employed, a hand was laid upon Robert’s arm, and his blood ran cold within him. To be served with a writ of *ne exeat regno* at such a momentous crisis would have gone nigh to kill him, and he expected no less than to see Maguire or Murphy, with help to back them, come to forbid his departure. To his immense relief, however, his eyes only met Mary’s pretty face, with a sad sweet smile upon it.

‘So you are going away—you two—without even a good-bye to me,’ sighed she.

‘We are, dear Mary,’ answered Lizzy: ‘we did not tell you of our intention, only in order that you might be in ignorance when taxed with the knowledge of it by others. Besides, in a few weeks at farthest, with Heaven’s aid, we hope to be back again with help for my poor brother and for all of you.’

‘I knew Mr Chesney was going,’ said Mary softly. ‘I felt that the boat was heavier than it should be, when I helped to beach it to-day. “There are provisions in it,” said I to myself, “under that tarpauling;” nor would he, I felt,

have shewn such anxiety about the safety of the gig, had he meant it to serve only as a fishing-boat. Yes; I knew *he* was going, and even guessed that it would be to-night; but I never dreamed of your accompanying him, Lizzy.'

'Will you come also?' said Lizzy tenderly. 'There is room, and there is food.'

'No, dear, no,' answered Mary. 'The temptation is great, but the people here will have no friend but me when Mr Chesney has gone, and I am of use to them in many ways: above all, I cannot leave my mother.'

'In a fortnight's time, be sure we shall meet again, Mary,' said Robert consolingly. 'Not one instant shall be lost by me in procuring assistance for you all—for you above all, Mary,' and he kissed her cheek, 'to whom we both owe so much.'

'You will do your best, as you always do for others,' answered she gravely; 'but something tells me that the help will come too late—that we are parting for ever. That is why I could not help coming here to say good-bye.'

After a few more words of consolation from Robert, which the girl acknowledged in silence, with the same sad smile, and after the two young women had affectionately embraced, the boat was launched, Mary running into the waves, and pushing it off with her own hands. Robert watched her standing on the shore until her form faded away into the dusk; every stroke of his oars sounding in his ears like a muffled funeral bell. I think that Lizzy also knew that Mary loved him, and pitied her, not with the contemptuous pity that some who have won the wealth for which they toiled, have for the poor, and that some women have for their unsuccessful rivals, but with true and genuine tenderness.

'Since it cannot now be seen from the island,' said Robert, breaking the long silence, 'we can put up the sail;' and he did so.

#### CHAPTER XX.—GONE UNDER.

They sailed all night, the sea being tolerably tranquil, in what Robert judged to be the right direction; but the clouds gathered heavily, and hid the stars, so that he could make use neither of them nor of the compass. Lizzy was very helpful to him in the management of the boat, and he allowed her to do more than was necessary, in order to distract her thoughts. As for sleep, anxiety forbade her even to close her eyes. At sunrise, which in these latitudes occurs at once, without the streaks of dawn that herald it at home, they looked anxiously about them, and beheld the island still lying at a great distance. The wind had unfortunately changed in the night, and their course with it. They lowered their sail at once, in hopes to have escaped observation, and Robert took to the oars, and pulled his best. But either the sail had already attracted the notice of those on land, or the gig itself was discernible by means of the telescope. Before half an hour had elapsed, their worst apprehensions were confirmed by seeing the pinnace leave the harbour, and, with a favourable breeze, bear directly down upon them. Robert once more put up the little sail, and rowed as before with all his might, while Lizzy steered; but it was evident that his exertions were useless.

'We are lost,' he murmured, 'and I have been

her destruction.' He felt sure that Kavanagh, urged by Maguire, would condemn Lizzy to death for disobeying his edict, probably without permitting him to speak in her defence: nay, if permitted, what would his words avail!

Lizzy awaited her fate in silence, keeping her loving eyes fixed on her companion's face; there were no tears in them now: English born and English bred, she was not one easily to give up hope, nor, indeed, was she so deeply impressed as Robert was with Kavanagh's despotic power. 'He would surely never put her brother to death, though he might frighten him, far less herself, or Robert.'

She was soon fated to be undeceived. The pinnace came up to them very rapidly, and on her deck they could perceive Murphy himself, with three of the most devoted of his adherents. The former levelled a revolver at Robert's head as she came alongside, and bade him and 'the deserter' come on board. There was nothing for it but to obey. The unhappy fugitives were transferred to the pinnace, which immediately put about for the island—clumsily enough, for Murphy knew little of seamanship, and his men less—with the gig fastened by a rope in tow. Robert was bound hand and foot, and thrown into the bows. Only one sentence more was vouchsafed by Murphy. 'It is lucky for you, traitor,' said he to his prisoner, 'that Maguire was not in my place. He would have shot you down like a dog. There is now, however, twelve hours of life before you, since you will die at sunset. As for this girl, she will not be hung, since I have taken a fancy to her myself;' and he looked towards Lizzy with sullen approval.

'Fool, idiot, that I was!' thought Robert, his helpless frame trembling with fury. He had had a pistol in his pocket, and might have settled accounts at least with this miscreant at the moment when he was overtaken, but he had forborne to do it, upon Lizzy's account, and lest the other men, who were also armed, might in revenge have killed her on the spot. Now, for her sake, he regretted that he had not done so. The poor girl was sitting in the stern, with her eyes fixed on the sea, and her face pale as death—the death which Robert knew that she was meditating. After Murphy's words she had made up her mind not to be carried ashore alive. Presently, the sea became extraordinarily agitated, and the vessel, guided as it was by such unskilful hands, began to be unmanageable.

'If you will loose my limbs,' said Robert, 'I will save the ship: otherwise, you will all four go to the bottom sooner than you expected.'

The three men looked at Murphy, as much as to say: 'There is something in that.'

'The Governor's orders were, that he was to be bound hand and foot,' mused Murphy; 'but then, on the other hand, he was to be brought back; and if we sink, that can't be done.' On the whole, he thought his master's orders—and he thought of nothing else—justified him in cutting Robert's bonds, and handing him the tiller—not, however, without this caution: 'If you do not steer direct for the island, I will blow your brains out.'

'I must steer as the sea will let me,' answered Robert coolly. A grim calmness had settled down upon him; the thought that he could kill Murphy at any moment was a very considerable comfort;



and whenever he looked towards Lizzy, he longed to do so. The sea still continued very rough, notwithstanding that there was scarcely any wind, and a cloudless sky. A wave would sometimes sweep the deck from end to end, and the blinding spray dashed over the bows like a fountain.

'You are not steering for the harbour!' roared Murphy presently, and fingering the butt of his revolver.

'The spray flies so high and thick that I cannot even see the island,' was Robert's quiet reply. 'Where is it?'

Ay, where *was* it? It had been seen a minute ago about half a league to the south-west, and now it was not visible.

Murphy and his men looked out for it with eager eyes; Lizzy lifted up her head, and languidly looked about her, though the question had little interest for her, since she never meant to set foot upon the shore. Robert, who knew the very place where it ought to be, could see nothing, though his gaze was prolonged and fixed. This was the more extraordinary, for at this time the waves began sensibly to abate, and the spray with it. The sea, and nothing else, was to be beheld on all sides. Incredible as the fact seemed, there could be no doubt about it: *The island was gone.*

They sailed on in the direct course in which it ought to lie; but as though it had been a floating island, with power of rapid locomotion, it eluded them.

'There is some witchcraft in this,' exclaimed Murphy, turning furiously towards Lizzy. 'It is you who have done it, you fair-faced devil.'

Robert took out his pistol, cocked it, and placed it on the seat behind him. One of the crew, however, stepped between the girl and Murphy.

'That is nonsense, Dick,' said he. 'There has been murder done enough already, and who knows but on that very account this thing has happened. Remember Pat Doolan!'

'But the young master!' ejaculated Murphy with a groan of agony. 'What *can* have become of him? O sir'—here he burst into tears, and turned to Robert with outstretched hands and suppliant voice—'I have done you wrong, and meant you worse, but you loved the young master once yourself—I know it, for that was why I hated you—I pray you, then, for his sake, tell me what has happened! You know so much, while I—I only know that I have lost him!'

With that he grovelled on the deck, and would have clasped Robert's knees, had he permitted it. 'Are you sure, are you quite sure that this is where the island was?'

'I am quite sure of that,' answered Robert gravely; 'and what has become of it, I think I can also tell you. I have no more experience of such matters than yourself, but I have read that islands are sometimes cast up in the sea, and there remain for many months and years, and then again are swallowed up with shocks as of an earthquake as quickly as they came; and such, as I believe, has been the fate of this one; at all events, it is beyond a doubt that underneath us now is the grave of all your friends, and some of mine.'

Lizzy, notwithstanding the miracle, as it seemed, that had been wrought for her deliverance, was weeping bitterly for the fate of her ill-starred brother. Robert, too, hung his head, thinking of the self-sacrificing hands that had pushed his boat

off but a few hours ago from what then was land, and were now tossing unlife-like beneath the wave with shingle and with shell. The men, too, were deeply affected, and gazed down into the blue depths, as though it were possible to descry within them the forms of their lost friends—wives, children, comrades. Perhaps, poor fellows, they were simple enough to suppose that the island might presently reappear again, with nobody much the worse. Murphy still knelt in the boat, with his clasped hands before his face—a piteous spectacle. No word was spoken for several minutes, passed in unutterable thoughts, till Robert again broke silence: 'There is no use in our remaining here, Murphy,' said he firmly; 'I shall now steer for Melbourne.'

'You will do as you please, sir,' answered the other in broken tones, 'and these men will obey you. The master said that if anything happened to him, you were to be his successor.'

These words were spoken with a certain reverential humility, as though Chesney had actually become invested with a portion of that authority which, with Murphy, stood in the place of all others—human or Divine. All at once he sprang to his feet, and stood in the attitude of one who listens attentively.

'What do you hear?' asked Robert anxiously. It was just possible that another volcanic shock, such as had doubtless submerged the island, had given warning of its approach, though to his own ear nothing was apparent but the soft splash of the wave and the flutter of the sail, for the boat was almost stationary.

'I hear his voice,' cried Murphy. "'Dick, Dick!'" he says, soft and low, just as he used to whisper when I was down with the fever, and he was minding me. I'm coming, I'm coming, master!'

And before any one could interfere, the faithful foolish fellow had placed his foot upon the gunwale, and with tight folded arms had leaped into the sea. He was a strong and active swimmer, as all well knew, but he never rose again. Robert would have given much to see him do so, for in that act of fidelity—dog-like or madman-like though it might be, but inexpressibly touching—all the wrongs done or intended to him or his were forgotten; but they watched for him in vain: Murphy had gone to join his master. After half an hour of fruitless waiting, the pinnace was put about, and sailed for Melbourne. They would have had to endure much privation on the way, even had they reached it at all, since the store of provisions in the gig was very insufficient for five persons; but on the second day they fell in with a vessel bound for England, which took them all on board. The terrible and unlooked-for destruction that had overwhelmed their friends—though at the same time it had preserved themselves—for some time overshadowed the lovers. For Mary, they both mourned; Lizzy bewailed her brother, for whose fate Robert could not be expected to feel poignant grief; while on the other hand Kavanagh's loss appeared far otherwise to him than to Lizzy, or than it had done to himself at the moment of their own deliverance. The acts of violence committed by the 'young master' from first to last, and inclusive of his brother's murder, he honestly ascribed to madness, to which indeed they were doubtless due: how far that madness had been induced by passion



and want of moral control, and finally by drink, was a question into which he dared not look. What he strove to remember now was only the drowned man's tenderness and trust. Lewis had perished without leaving any heirs, so that the bequest of the three thousand pounds—with the deduction of that large proportion of it which he did not forget to bestow on the three survivors from Murphy's Island, in accordance with Kavanagh's wishes—might fairly be considered to be his own. The first sum which he expended out of it on arriving in England went to the purchase of a marriage ring; and during the time which the cruelty of the law interposed between him and wedded bliss, he placed his Lizzy under the care of Mistress Mulvaney. To the former's surprise, and indeed not a little to her scandal, the widow welcomed him with a hearty embrace. 'I never thought to see you again, my brave boy,' cried she, 'nor to hear anything of you, save that you had come to grief; far less such good news as this;' and here she kissed Lizzy. 'You went away from my house, lad, in very indifferent company: as to one of them, I ask no question, for ever since what happened at Falston Hall I washed my hands of him. But how is that ne'er-do-well, Dick?'

Robert's face told her before he could reply in words. The widow plumped down on the little sofa—it was in the old smoke-room that the interview took place—and burst into tears.

'Heaven forgive me for speaking ill of the dead!' cried she; 'and he such a broth of a boy! But tell me all about it.'

Robert did not tell her all, or perhaps she would once more have altered her opinions; but he told her what he could of good about him; and especially concerning his end.

'I never thought Dick would overlive his master,' was the widow's quiet comment when she had recovered herself. 'Do you remember what you wrote about him to your pretty sweetheart here, comparing his fidelity to that of a dog? He got hold of that letter, and made me read it to him in this very room; and when I got to that part of it, the poor fellow only said: "Well, that's true enough;" as though he was proud of it.'

With his remaining two thousand pounds or so, Robert purchased a little business in the cabinet-making line, for which he had always had a taste; and being not only diligent himself, but having a diligent wife—which always doubles a poor man's gains—he soon became prosperous enough. The first article of any elaboration that he turned out with his own hands was a tea-caddy, which now forms the admiration of the patrons of Mulvaney's. The outside has succumbed to the all-pervading influence of the place, but the inside—and this Mrs Mulvaney persists in ascribing to its excellent workmanship, rather than to its contents—has up to this time successfully resisted the flavour of onions. Robert has one son, named after himself. He would have called him 'Frank,' after his benefactor, but Lizzy opposed it. 'Mr Kavanagh was very good to us,' pleaded she, 'I own; but I do not wish my boy to remind me in any way, even in name, of a mur—I mean, of Murphy's Master.' In graceful return for this compliance, when a little girl arrived to make their home complete in its domestic furniture, her mother named her Mary. As for the other Mary—Mary Becher—so strangely and unwittingly mingled with their fortunes, nothing could

be heard of her, though Robert did his best to find her out. He felt that the least they could do was to share with her, should she need it, the abundance with which they had been dowered by him she had known and loved as Wilson. It is probable, however, that he had amply provided for her before he quitted England.

The Chesneys lead a happy quiet life, and they desire no other. The love of adventure with which Robert was once possessed has been fully satisfied, and he is very reticent concerning his past experience. As a customer of his of some standing, and admitted in some sort to his familiarity, as being an amateur cabinet-maker who has a turning-lathe of his own, I gained possession of the foregoing facts; but I should not have done so, had I not, in addition to those pretensions, happened to disclose the circumstance that I had been witness to a certain scene at a turnpike gate near Windsor Forest, on one stormy winter night, which was, as it turned out, the prologue to his own eventful history. I, too, although but for a few moments, had seen both Murphy and Murphy's master, and therefore seemed entitled to be told their story.

To assert its truth would seem to be to protest too much; but as a satisfaction to that considerable class of the community who 'only believe what they read in the newspapers,' I may add that its most singular feature—the sinking of a populated island—was recorded in the columns of the *Times* within the last three years.

#### END OF MURPHY'S MASTER.

#### A 'NAVY' BALL.

It came in the way of my work recently to visit a colony of navvies engaged in the construction of the heaviest portion of the works on the new line of railway at present being made between Settle and Carlisle. The headquarters of this scattered colony are on the slope of an outlying buttress of Ingleborough Hill, at the foot of which is a deep hole in the limestone, whence issues the headwaters of the Ribbles. From some old legend of a suicide, this wild and savage place bears the curious name of Batty-wife-hole. Three or four hundred navvies are housed in the wooden huts, covered with black felting, that have been set down at hap-hazard on to the slope above the river-head, and there are various settlements bearing outlandish names bestowed upon them by the navvies themselves. Inkermann, Sebastopol, Belgravia, Jericho, Salt Lake City—all these can be reached with no greater exertion than half an hour's wade through the deep, treacherous, oozy bog of which much of the moorland is composed. True, when reached, they are not much to look at, but they are racy of phases of that curious half-savage navvy life, which has in it so much that is interesting to the student of the by-tracks of human life.

While staying in Batty-wife-hole, I became acquainted with a family which I shall call Pollen. The father had been a navvy in his earlier days; but having saved a little money, had set up a Tommy-shop, and was making money. His wife was a robust, powerful, purposeful dame, of immense energy, considerable surface-roughness, and real genuine kindness of heart. During my stay, I was indebted to this burly navvy-woman for several good turns, in connection with

which there could be no thought of self-interest. There was a married daughter who lived in a caravan at the gable of the parental hut, and there were two unmarried daughters, one an extremely pretty girl of about twenty, the other considerably younger.

Pollen had taken a letter for me down to Ingleton, and in the afternoon I looked in to see whether he had come back. His good lady reported his non-arrival, adding—'Afore we comed here, we were on the "Surrey and Sussex;" and this morning, Betsy Smith, a lass as my daughter knowed there, comed here to see her mother, as is married on old Recks; and my girls, they be to have a holiday for to spend wi' their old friend. Well, I bid them tighten themselves up a bit, and tak' a basket, and go to the top of Ingleborough Hill, the three on 'em, for a day's 'scurion like; and when they'd come back, I'd have tea waitin' an' a cake, and I'd get in a bottle or two of wine, and we'd make a bit of a feast on't, you see, sir, for the lasses mayn't see one another no more in this here life.' It seemed as if I had achieved the footing of a friend of the family; and Mrs Pollen invited me, 'if I would not think it beneath me,' to look in and participate in the modest festivities of the evening. Beneath me! Why, it was the very thing I desired.

The navy population of Batty-wife-hole do not keep fashionable hours. Half-past five was the hour named by Mrs Pollen, and I was punctual. As I came up the road from the 'Chum-hole,' through Inkermann, to the mansion of the Pollens, the face of the swamp in the watery twilight was alive with navvies on their way home from work. They stalked carelessly through the most horrid clinging mire. What thews and sinews, what stately, stalwart forms, what breadth of shoulder and shapely development of muscle were displayed by these home-coming sons of toil! The navy is a very rough diamond; but when you come to mix with him familiarly, and to understand him, you come to realise that he is a diamond. His character has never been more accurately delineated than in the words which I venture to quote, written by an engineer who knows him to his very marrow. 'The English navy has his bad points. Very bad points, they are, no doubt, but, as a rule, they have all a common origin. The fountain of all, or almost all, the troubles of an English employer of this description of labour is the ale-can. But with these bad points there are many elements of the true pith and ring of the English character. Industry like that of the beehive; sturdy toil such as that which was commanded by the builders of the pyramids, or the brick-building kings of Nineveh; firm fellowship and good feeling, evinced in subscriptions to sick funds and doctors' bills; clear-headed application of labour to produce a definite result; above all, a sense of the right that man and master alike have to fair-play and honest dealing: all these virtues are to be found in the kit of the navy. He is a man with whom there is some satisfaction in working, and a man as to whom you can attribute any failure in the attempt to elevate him into a position of permanent comfort and respectability not to any inherent infirmity of nature, but to want of early training, and to the potent influence of strong drink.'

The 'lasses' had got down from Ingleborough

Hill, and were seated round the huge coal-fire in Mrs Pollen's keeping-room. It was a state occasion; and the six navvies, who are lodgers, were relegated to their own sleeping-apartment, where I found Mr Pollen, slightly the fresher from his journey to Ingleton, and having his hair cut by one of his lodgers prior to entering the sphere of gentility in the other room. Mrs Pollen was painfully polite, and her notions of my capacities for rashers of bacon eaten along with buttered toast must have been based on her experience of navvies. The young ladies were at first slightly *distrain*, but Ingleborough air had given their appetite a beautiful fillip. Mr Pollen was benignly jocose, with a slight tendency to hiccup. After tea, he entertained me with an historical account of Batty-wife-hole, from his first appearance in a van on its soil, exactly three years previous. Shortly afterwards, he said, 'some chaps came down to make experimental borings, and they had to bide wi' us in the wan, for there were nowheres else to bide. All that winter there were ten of us living in that van, and a tight fit it were, surely. Of a night I used to have to stand by it for half an hour with the bull's-eye as a guide to the men home-coming through the waste. Sometimes one would stick, and his mates would have to dig him out; there were two chain o' knee-deep water four times a day for the fellows atween their meat and their work.'

'It were a winter! The snow lay on the backs of the hill-sheep for two months at a stretch, and many on 'em were frozen as hard as a chip. But we got over it somehow; and in the spring, Recks and me built this cottage, and the works began in fair earnest. There's been a good many deaths—what with accidents, low fevers, small-pox, and so on. I've buried three o' my own. I'm arter a sort the undertaker o' the place. You passed the little church down at Chapel-a-dale, near the head of the valley. Well, in the three years I've toted over a hundred of us down the hill to the little churchyard lying round the church. T'other day I had toted one poor fellow down—he were hale and hearty on Thursday, and on Tuesday he were dead o' erinsipalis; and I says to the clerk as how I thought I had toted well nigh on to a hundred down over the beck to Chapel-a-dale. He goes, and has a look at his books, and comes out, and says, says he: "Joe, you've fetched to t' kirkyawd sackly a hundred and ten corps!" I knowed I warn't far out. They've had to add a piece on to t' churchyard, for it were chock-full. And there were one poor fellow I toted down the hill as don't lie in Chapel-a-dale. It were the first summer we were here, and a cutting had been opened outside the Dents-head end of the tunnel. Five men were in a heading as was being driven in along the track of the tunnel. There came on such a fearful thunderstorm as nobody hereabout ever saw the like afore or since. The end of the cutting was stopped up, and the water came tearing down the hillsides into it, and soon filled it like the lock of a canal. The chaps in the heading were caught afore they could get out; as the water rose, three swam into the cutting, and tried to scramble out. As the water rose, they got on a wagon that was in the heading, and tried to prop themselves up between some barrels that were on it. We could just see one, the tallest on the two—the face of him just above the water, and his hands held afore

his month, to fend off the water that came lipping over him every now and then. He could get no higher for the head of the working, and it was horrible to see him. But we were tearing like mad at the bank of earth that was blocking the cutting, and at last we got a hole jumped through it, and then the water soon found its own vent, and emptied the cutting. The shorter of the two men in the heading was drowned, and his mouth stopped up wi' clay. He came from Kingscliffe in Northamptonshire, hard by my own native place; and I got a coffin for the poor chap, and toted him down to Ingleton, and sent him home by the railway.'

I don't know to what greater length Mr Pollen's gossiping reminiscences might have extended, if they had not been interrupted by a tap at the door communicating with the room inhabited by the navy lodgers. Sundry smothered and gasping squeakings of a fiddle had been audible lately from that apartment, the sounds being suggestive of the existence of an assertive and pertinacious violin, upon which the navvies were collectively sitting, sternly determined that while they lived, it should not violate the decorous quiet incumbent on lodgers whose respected host and hostess were entertaining visitors. The 'lasses,' I had noticed, were yawning a little after tea, as if the hill-air of Ingleborough had induced a somniferous tendency. As the tap was heard at the door, a glance of mutual intelligence and a smile of satisfaction passed round the younger ladies, and in truth Mrs Pollen herself did not frown as she called: 'Come in.' Enter a stalwart navvy, whose powerful frame contrasted comically with his shamefaced countenance. He was blushing from ear to ear, yet there was a twinkle in the big black eye of the good-looking fellow that might speak of a consciousness he was not altogether taking a leap in the dark. He bore a message from the navy brotherhood in the other room. He craved humbly of 'Mother Pollen' that he and they should be admitted to participate in the festivities of the evening, whereunto they engaged to contribute by instrumental and vocal music, replenishment of the refreshments utterly regardless of cost, and good behaviour. Pollen pronounced at once for their admission. Mrs Pollen only stipulated for order; and the navvies trooped solemnly in, and seated themselves on the extreme edge of a form. Mrs Pollen helped them to wine, of which all ceremoniously partook; and then the black-eyed navvy took Mrs Pollen aside, an interview which resulted in the introduction of a pail of strong ale and a bottle of whisky. The navvies were a decided acquisition. First, the black-eyed navvy played a lively spring on his fiddle. I may remark, that he had imperceptibly edged off the form, and had dexterously taken up new ground between Miss Pollen and the lass from the 'Surrey and Sussex.' Then Tom Purgin sang *My Pretty Jane*. Mr Purgin was a smart ruddy-faced young fellow with black curling hair, and the physical development of a Hercules. 'Tom is the best man on this section,' whispered Pollen to me. A dance followed—something between a reel and an Irish jig—in which the black-eyed navvy immensely distinguished himself by playing and dancing at the same time; while the noise his big boots made in the double-shuffle was a Terpsichorean triumph that may be imagined, but cannot

be described. The beer-pail was replenished, the ladies were radiant with good-humour and enjoyment, the navvies were making themselves as agreeable as possible, and the evening altogether was passing most hilariously.

The 'Surrey and Sussex' lass was suddenly interrupted in the middle of a song by a loud knock at the outer door. Mrs Pollen rose, and admitted a stranger, a big navvy in working-dress. This worthy had no card, but he 'named himself' as the 'Wellingborough Pincer.' At a glance, one could see that the 'Wellingborough Pincer' was not quite so sober as he necessarily would have been if intoxicating beverages had never been invented. He was a new-comer at Batty-wife-hole, having only arrived that day; and being a Northamptonshire man, he had come to pay a visit to his 'townie,' as he had learned Mr Pollen was. On Pollen the ties of 'township' are binding; he hailed the 'Wellingborough Pincer' with effusion; and that individual soon made himself extremely at home, resorting with marked freedom and frequency to the beer-can. Our own navvies had been obviously chafing at the goings-on of the 'Pincer,' restraining themselves, however, for the sake of peace. His conduct was obviously leading to a shindy. Mrs Pollen had been absent for some time, engaged in serving some customers; but just at this crisis she came upon the scene, and comprehended its bearings with a quickness which may have been owing to intuition, but perhaps more to experience. To resolve, with Mrs Pollen is to act. In two strides she had the 'Wellingborough Pincer' by the scruff of the neck, and was bundling him toward the door. He struggled a little, but Mrs Pollen pinioned him with a vice-like grasp, and with a promptitude and dexterity which won my heartiest admiration, accomplished his ejection. I rather think she threw him out; anyhow, there was a sound as of a heavy body falling; and returning to the bosom of her family, she forbade any of 'her men' from following the 'Pincer' into the darkness whereunto she had relegated him. Harmony recommenced; the black-eyed navvy and I became confidential; and he told me how he had loved Miss Pollen for a considerable period, how they 'had squared it together,' and how he only wished that her father had another van in which they might take up housekeeping. In the midst of this interesting conversation, the 'Wellingborough Pincer' reappeared on the scene. Mrs Pollen had not bolted the door, and he had entered bent on apologising all round, and expressing his heart-felt repentance for his conduct. It struck me at the time that the leading motive for the 'Pincer's' apparent contrition was a keen anxiety to return to the neighbourhood of the beer-pail; but he appeared sincere, and his expressions of sorrow were graciously accepted. He made the most of his time, and it was a caution to see what quantities of beer that man contrived to swallow. But he was an ill-conditioned dog in his cups. Without the slightest warning, he suddenly hit Tom Purgin in the eye. It was good to see that honest fellow's power of self-restraint. 'It will keep till to-morrow,' he said with a pleasant smile, as he wiped some blood from the cut cheek-bone. This was Tom's own quarrel, and in his own quarrel he would not brawl in the presence of the women. But the blow had cut short the 'Pincer's'



stay under Mr Pollen's roof. Again Mrs Pollen was upon him; again that determined and powerful female grappled him, dragged him across the floor, and sent him forth from the door. Enlivened by experience, she this time shot the bolt.

But this 'Wellingborough Pincer' was an incorrigible and indomitable nuisance. He would not retire quietly after this his second ejection. He picked himself up, and commenced a persistent hammering on the doors and window-shutters of the hut, accompanying this exercise with a voluble flow of execration of the people who were inside. With difficulty did Mrs Pollen restrain her navvies from sallying out and inflicting condign punishment on the incorrigible 'Pincer.' But it was reserved for Pollen himself to vindicate the proud principle that an Englishman's house is his castle. Rising (with some little difficulty) from his seat, he oracularly pronounced the monosyllable 'Joe!' At the word there emerged from under the table a powerfully built bulldog, whose broad chest, strong loins, muscular neck, and massive jaw, gave evidence of strength and purity of blood, as did the small red eye of unconquerable ferocity. Silently Pollen moved to the door with Joe at his heels. He threw it open, just as the 'Pincer' had commenced to rain on it a fresh shower of blows. 'Here, Joe!' was all Pollen's reply to the volley of execrations that greeted him. There was a dull thud of a heavy fall, a gurgling noise, and at Pollen's word, 'Come, Joe!' the dog reappeared, sententiously wagging his tail. The door was shut, and the 'Wellingborough Pincer' demonstrated no more against it.

After a parting glass, I withdrew from the festive scene, declining with thanks the offers of Tom Purgin and the black-eyed navvy to see me home. I examined the precincts carefully, out of what was perhaps a weak apprehension that the Pincer might be lying about somewhere, mangled, helpless, and perhaps indeed throttled. But that worthy was 'gone and left not a wrack behind,' and I sought my couch with equanimity. A day or two later, Mr Pollen called on me, and told me that he had received a summons at the instance of the 'Wellingborough Pincer.' Rather, indeed, there were two summonses, one for selling drink without a licence, the other for setting a dog at that interesting gentleman. Mr Pollen was game for litigation, and would hear of no compromise. The 'Pincer' had called upon him that morning, and expressed his readiness to stay proceedings, on condition that the dog were shot, adding, that the doctor had assured him, were this not done, that his—the Pincer's—arm must inevitably be amputated. Mr Pollen had requested him to go about his business, and was ready to face the magistrates in the serene consciousness of virtue.

I left the place before this *cause célèbre* was tried; but I heard the leading incidents—Mr Pollen drove to Ingleton with his wife and his two witnesses, Mr Purgin and the black-eyed navvy. The 'Pincer' stated his case, and summoned a witness who saw him worried by the dog. Then Mr Pollen arose and pleaded his own cause. He cited his wife to prove that she sold no drink, but that the whole affair was her 'treat' in honour of the 'Surrey and Sussex' lass. The magistrates asked particularly whether it was in defence of his own premises that Pollen had called in the assistance of the dog, and

on being assured that this was so, gave judgment against the 'Pincer' on both counts, condemning him also in costs. On the way home, the Pollen conveyance, which contained, in addition to the load it had brought down, the Pincer's witness, was upset in the ditch, owing, it was hinted, to the collective inebriety of the passengers, but ultimately reached Batty-wife-hole, and a triumphal entry was accorded to the Pollens. The 'Wellingborough Pincer' returned to work a wiser if not a better man, but he was execrated by the whole community for having imported legal proceedings into a colony where the policemen live in a sort of contemptuous toleration. Hints were uttered that his career at Batty-wife-hole would be a short one. The 'Wellingborough Pincer' was last seen in the neighbourhood of a deep blind shaft, that had been excavated to divert the water from the workings in the tunnel. He may have suddenly migrated, but there are not wanting those who darkly hint that an exploration of the shaft would disclose the fact of his being in the immediate vicinity of its bottom.

#### TO A RAIN-DROP.

HAIL! jewel, pendent on the grassy blade,  
Now dimly seen amid a transient shade,  
Anon resplendent, like a bridal maid

Wed by the wind,  
Thou tremblest at his kisses half-afraid,  
And half-inclined!

How many hues of beauty charm thy face!  
For there successive rays each other chase;  
The ruby now, the sapphire next we trace;  
The chrysolite  
Supplants the emerald rich in vernal grace,  
And dear to sight!

O fairy creature! whither hast thou come?  
Was the Atlantic once thy stormy home?  
Or didst thou through the mild Pacific roam  
'Mong coral isles,  
And thence ascend to the ethereal dome  
With saintly smiles?

Hast thou, in clouds of richest colours blended,  
On rising suns and setting suns attended?  
Or hast thou shone in bars of beauty splendid  
I' the Rainbow's robe?  
Or hast thou in a misty chariot wended  
Around our globe?

Alas! thou answerest not, thou brilliant mute;  
Thou shinest on in silence absolute;  
The wanderings of thy restless silver foot  
Thou canst not tell;  
And soon thou shalt resume thy pilgrim's route,  
Nor sigh farewell!

ERRATUM—RAINFALL.—In our *Month* for January last, 10,000 tons was by a clerical error represented to be the amount of water given to an acre by one inch of rainfall. It should have been 100, or, more exactly, 101 tons.

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